



Manitoba's Legislative Building

"Not for present delight nor use alone, but such as our descendants will thank us for."

With those words the legislators of 1911 laid down their concept for the design of Manitoba's Legislative Building. Today the building projects an optimistic future for Manitobans even while fulfilling its purpose as the home of government.

Not only does the exterior give pleasure with its classic lines, the beauty of the interior gives a sense of calm, quiet dignity inherent in the seat of Government.

In addition to its function as the centre of legislative activity, it is the focal point for many events drawing together peoples of the many ethnic origins that are melded in the Manitoba mosaic.

In its park setting, the Legislative Building stands as a monument to the men who first conceived it — a monument that will continue to give pleasure and enjoyment for generations to come.

We invite visitors to discover the richness, the grace and beauty of the Legislative Building, only one of the countless features of Manitoba's inheritance.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Edward Schreyer".

HON. EDWARD SCHREYER, PREMIER



820-
JA

The History



The decision to erect a magnificent new structure to house the legislative and governmental functions of Manitoba was made in 1911. When the legislators of that day decided to erect the new building, they determined that it should not only be practical for the purposes of government, but should also be the focal point of the Manitoba capital combining grace and beauty of concept and design with the practical necessities of day to day governmental operations. Their concept, stated in their own words was to provide a legislative building that would be a source of pride to Manitobans for years to come: "not for present delight nor use alone, but such as our descendants will thank us for".

With this criterion established, preliminary specifications were drawn up and an architectural competition with a first prize of \$10,000.00 was conducted throughout the British Empire. A total of 67 entries were received, and following judging, Frank Worthington Simon of Liverpool, England, was chosen as the winner. Mr. Simon, who later became President of the Royal Institute of British Architects, was also the designer of the Liverpool Cotton Exchange, Liverpool University, and the buildings of the Edinburgh International Exhibition.

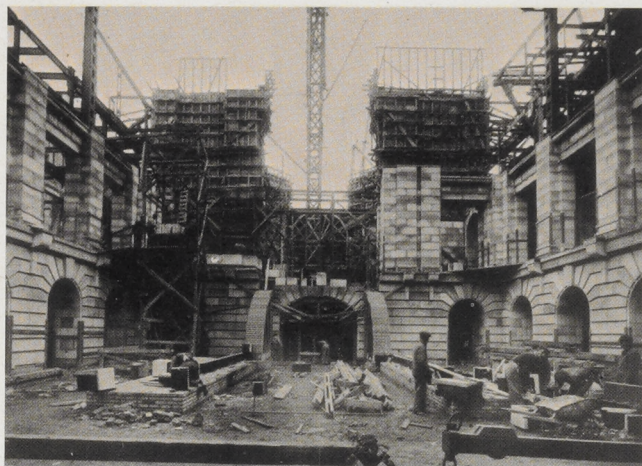
Actual work on the project commenced in 1913 when excavation operations were begun. The following year, the walls were beginning to take shape, when the outbreak of World War I severely delayed construction progress. Another delay that was encountered was the need to replenish the original appropriation as costs

and construction expenses increased beyond the original estimates.

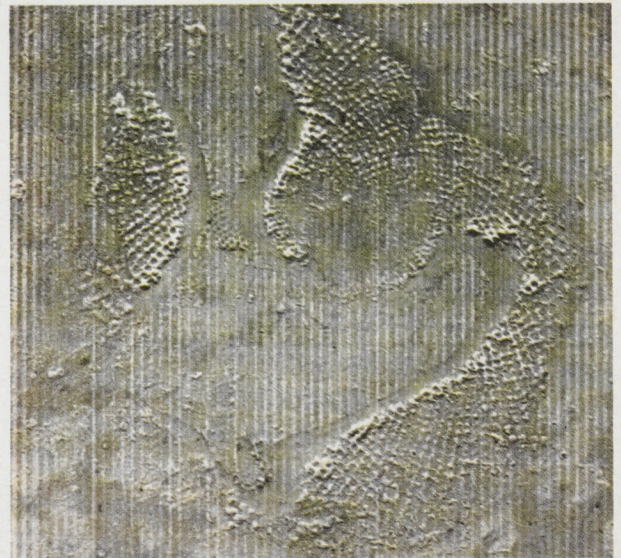
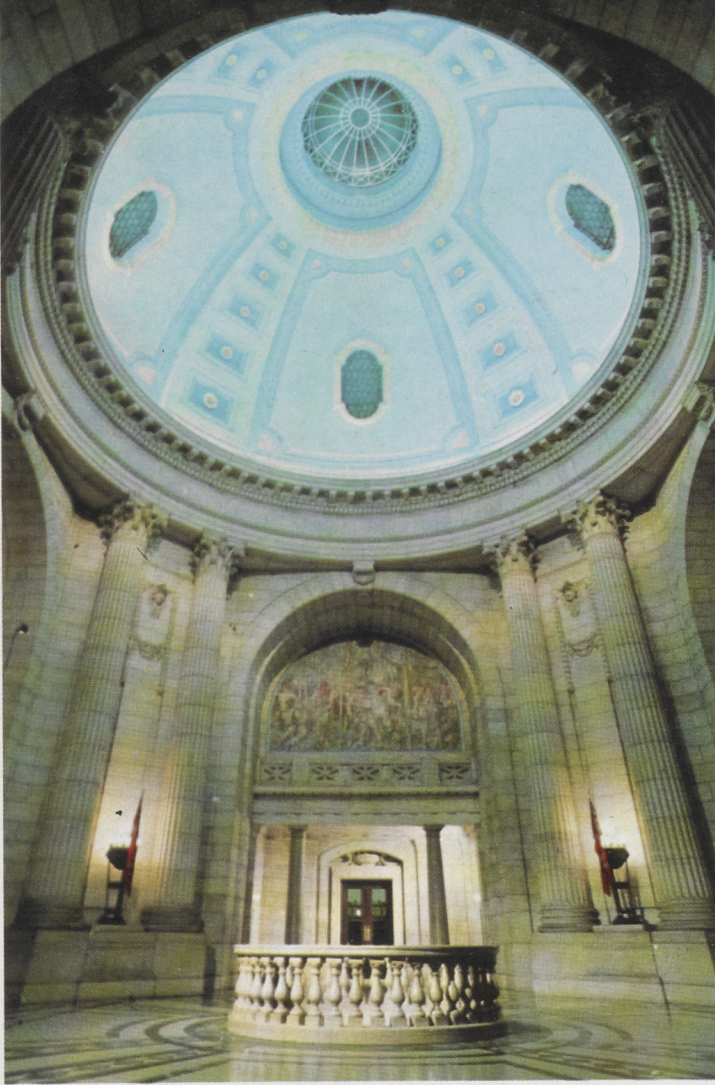
With the war concluded in 1918, construction on the legislative buildings again progressed rapidly. The building was completed and first occupied in 1919. On July 15th, 1920—the 50th anniversary of Manitoba's entry in Canadian Confederation—the building was officially opened and the first session of the legislature was held in the new building that year.

Originally, the building was occupied as the seat of government for both the legislative and administrative branches of the Province. It now houses only the Ministers of the Provincial Cabinet, their deputies and ministerial staff. Over the years, as the size and complexity of government operations increased, the members of the civil service have been moved to other buildings, with the largest concentration of governmental administrative offices located in the ten storey Norquay Building, located one block north of the legislative building.

The grace and beauty of the legislative building have endured undiminished since the years in which it was first conceived. The original cost of the project when completed was \$9,379,000.00. Today the value is placed at more than \$50,000,000.00. But more important than the dollar value of the structure is its constant fulfillment of its original intent as a proud focal point of Manitoba's capital conceived—"not for present delight nor use alone, but such as our descendants will thank us for".



The Design



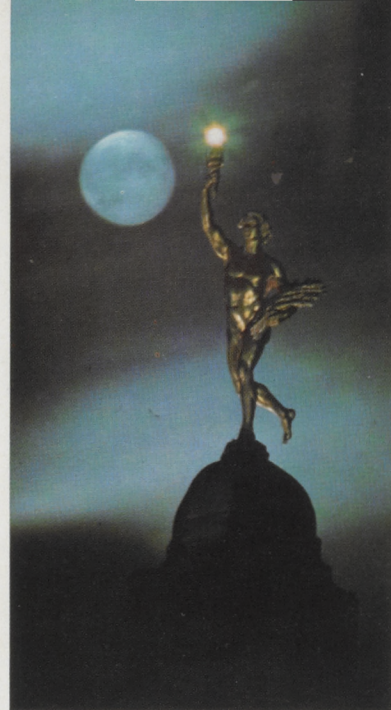


The Manitoba legislative building is of classic Greek design. Constructed in the form of a letter 'H' it is built of a local Manitoba limestone known as Tyndall stone obtained from the quarry at Tyndall, Manitoba. Local history dating back as much as two thousand years is clearly evident in the face of the stone itself. Fossils of fern-like vegetation and aquatic creatures are readily discernible in the face of the Tyndall stone throughout the corridors of the building.

The two wings of the legislative building are each 328 feet long, with the central portion which forms the crossbar of the letter 'H' being 337 feet in length. There are 220,000 square feet of floor space in the three-storey building, topped off by a huge dome 240 feet above ground level.

Atop this dome is Manitoba's most prominent landmark—the Golden Boy—a five-ton, 13½ foot bronze statue. Clutching a sheaf of wheat under his left arm and holding aloft an eternally lit torch in his right, he symbolizes the spirit of progress looking northward to the frontier of future economic development.

Created by the French sculptor Charles Gardet, the Golden Boy was cast in the Barbidiene Foundry during the First World War. Before it could be shipped out however, the foundry was destroyed in a bombing raid.



The statue was fortunately undamaged and was quickly taken and loaded on a ship bound for New York. For the next two years it lay in the hold of the ship which had been commandeered as a troop transport. It was not until after the war, and many dangerous trips across the submarine-infested Atlantic, that the Golden Boy finally arrived in Winnipeg and was positioned atop the legislative building.

The building's main entrance is on the north side and opens into a concourse leading to the grand staircase. These stairs and the floor are built of various types of marble complementing the limestone walls and intricately plastered dome ceilings. Flanking the staircase are two huge bronze buffalo—also the work of Gardet.

At the upper level of the grand staircase is the antehall which provides the formal approach to the actual legislative chamber where the laws of the Province are formulated.

In the centre of this antehall is a circular ballustrade looking down into the Pool of the Black Star on the floor below. This chamber, with three steps leading down into it, is a perfect circle surrounded by 16 pillars and is another example of the Egyptian influence evident in the building.

The Art & Sculpture

Above the main north entrance to the building high atop six stone columns is the pediment which symbolizes the nation. Carved in stone the figures depict Canada's motto: "From Sea to Sea". On the east is a nautical wheel representing the Atlantic while on the west a hand holds Neptune's trident representing the Pacific Ocean. The central figure sitting on a throne is Manitoba—the Keystone Province. She holds the licitor's staves across her knees in the position of authority. Other figures in the pediment represent the spirit of progress, the family unit, immigration, agriculture, labor and capital.

Above and behind the pediment looking east and west are two large stone sphinx—linking the ages and recognizing ancient Egypt's contribution to present day civilization. Further above and situated at the four corners of the base of the dome are statuary depicting industry, agriculture, art and science.

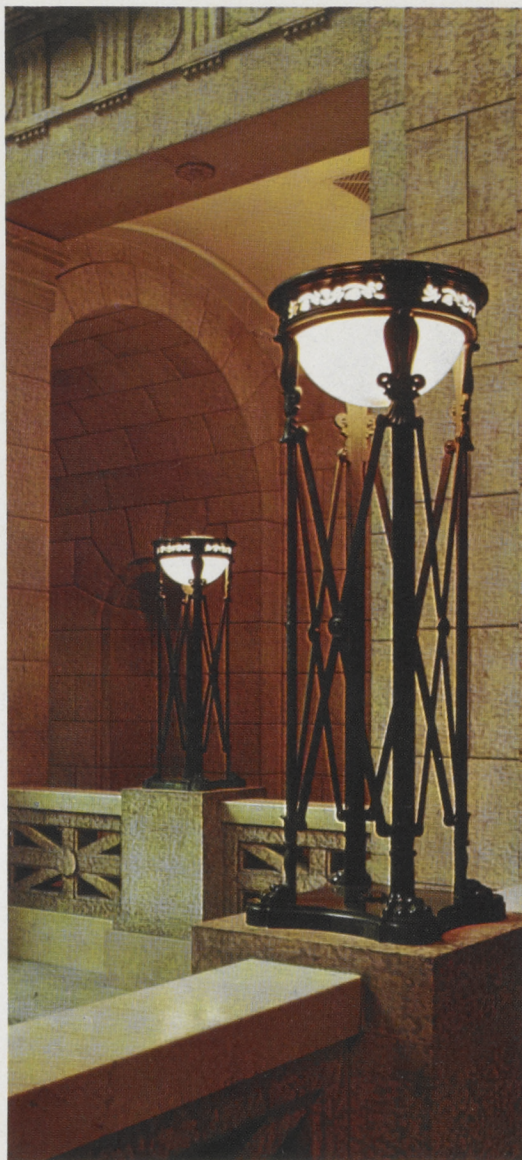
Inside the building looking northward from the grand staircase one can see the Caryatides—a group of four sculptured Greek maidens. Carved in stone they form part of the pillars that hold up the north side of the third floor wall. They were modelled by Albert Hodge after some Greek sculpture found in the Porch of Maidens in Athens.

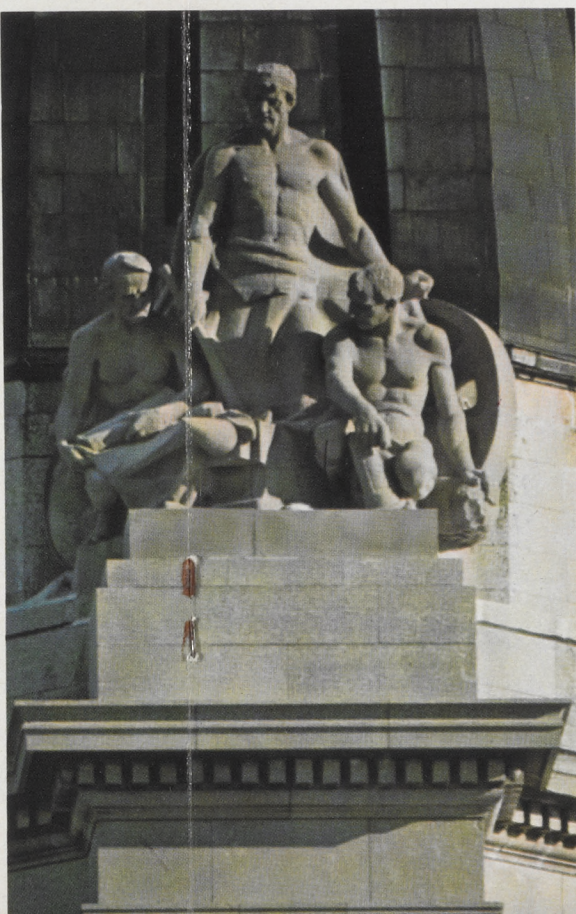
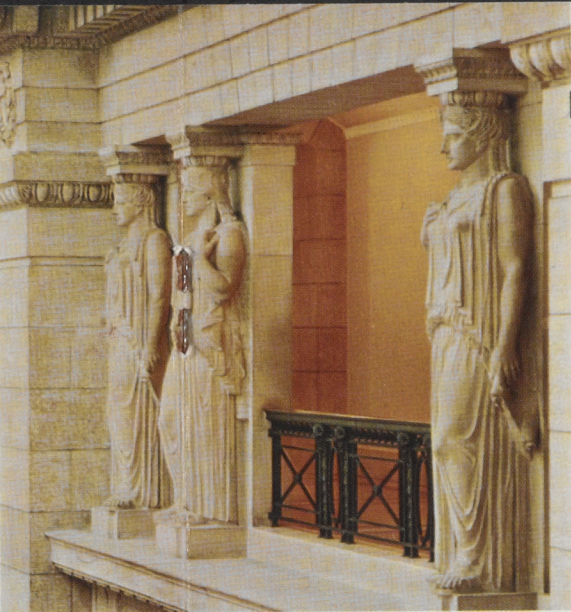
At the top of the stairs at the back of the antehall leading into the legislative chamber is a mural commemorating the first world war. Painted by Frank Bangwyn of London, England, it depicts various military activities as they existed at the front in France between 1914 and 1918.

Another mural, inside the chamber above the speaker's chair by Augustus Vincent Tack of New York, is based on the theme of the origin of legislation. The central figure in the allegory is Justice flanked by Wisdom and Knowledge. Other figures representing the various estates of man are encircled by the branches of the tree of life.

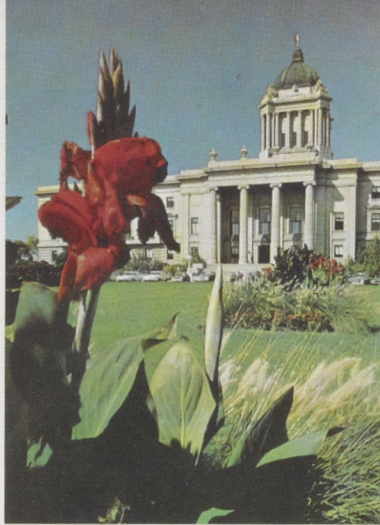
Below the mural are five panels with the names of great lawmakers: Confucius of China, Lycurgus of Greece, Alfred of England, Justinian of Rome, and Manu of China. Beneath these panels, on either side of the speaker's chair, are two bronze statues—Moses and Solon.

Around the second floor balcony is another touch of ancient civilization—Pompeiiian lamps set on the railings of the balconies.





The Grounds



The Manitoba legislative building is located on 31 acres of land south of Broadway Avenue which slope gently toward the banks of the Assiniboine River. The grounds and the adjacent five acre Memorial Park, across Broadway Avenue, are filled with a variety of trees, shrubs and formal flower beds.

The 17 types of trees on the grounds range from butter-nuts, black walnuts and hackberry to the native birch, stately American Elm and basswood. Among the 40 varieties of shrubs are Toba Hawthorne, various types of lilacs, American Cranberry and several different strains of Viburnums.

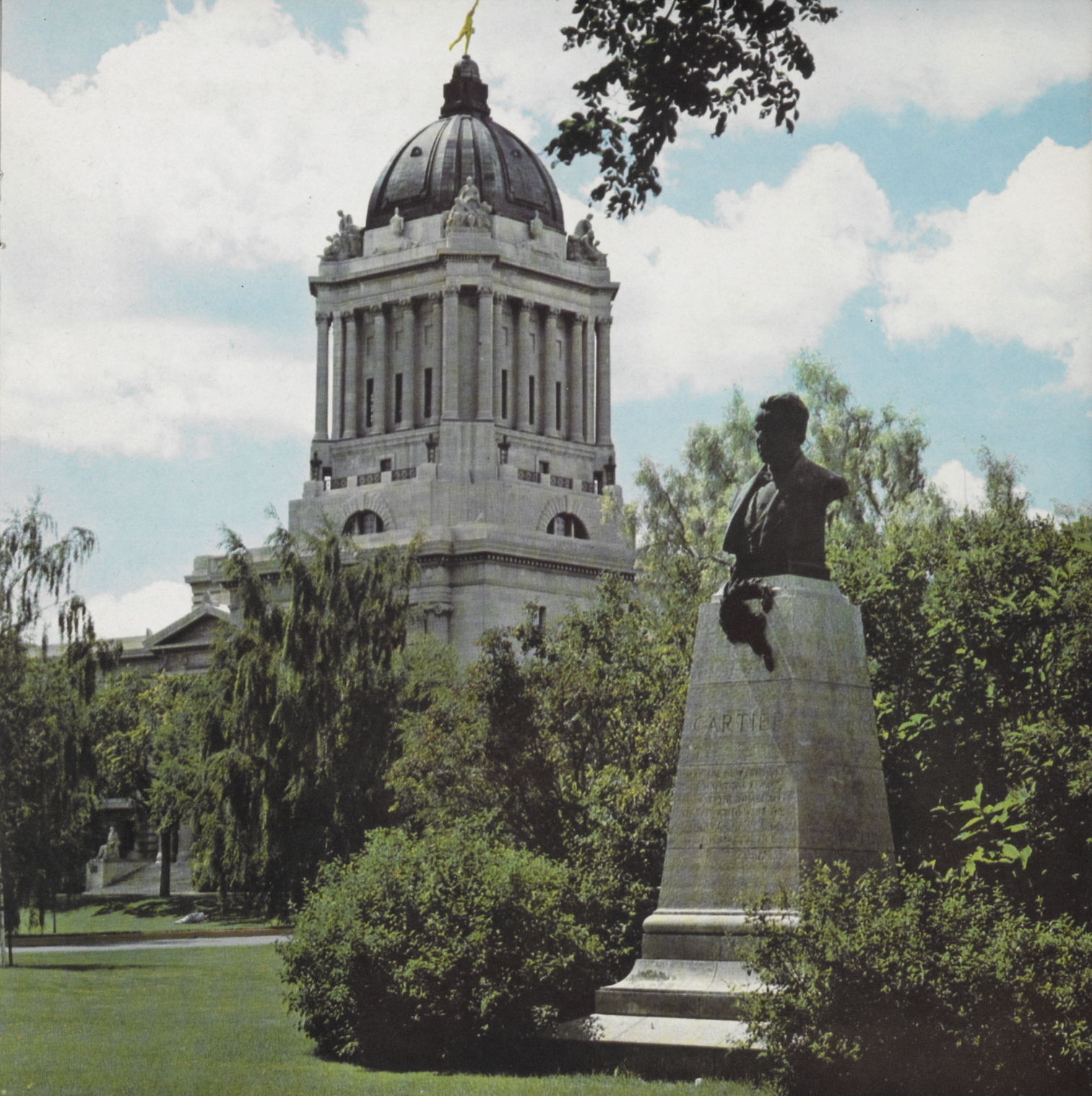
Two government greenhouses supply the plants and flowers for the legislative building year around and also grow the bedding plants which are planted in the flower beds each spring.

The lush grass on the grounds, in the park and on the river bank south of the building is a mixture of Kentucky Blue and creeping red fescue. It is meticulously cut and watered regularly by a staff of 10 which keeps the grounds one of the horticultural showplaces of the Province.

The basic stock in the many flower beds is made up of Cannas—a large broad-leaved plant with red blossoms which is a member of the banana plant family—plus geraniums and petunias. The grounds are watered directly from the river via a special watering system.

The lawns are dotted with statuary symbolic of the multitude of ethnic backgrounds which make up Manitoba's society. On the lawn immediately in front of the main entrance sits a bronze Queen Victoria on a throne wearing a crown and holding the orb and sceptre—symbols of the royal ties with Britain. Other statues include Scotland's Robert Burns, Georges-Etienne Cartier—French Canadian Father of Confederation, Iceland's man of letters Jon Sigurdson, and Ukrainian poet Taras Shevchenko. A next-of-kin memorial, honoring the dead of two world wars occupies a prominent place in the northwest corner of the grounds.

The southeast corner of the grounds is occupied by the official residence of the Lieutenant-Governor of Manitoba, the Queen's resident representative in the Province.



Government

While Manitoba's legislative building is a constant pleasure to the people of the Province and to visitors because of its architectural magnificence, beautiful design and as an elaborate showcase for superb statuary and artwork it is, nevertheless, a very practical edifice housing the day-to-day administrative functions of Manitoba's government.



At the outset, when the building was completed, it contained all of the various civil service departments of the government of Manitoba. Over the years, however, the functions of government and the civil service have expanded to serve the growing Province to the point that the building could no longer contain all elements of governmental service. Today, civil service departments are relocated in various buildings throughout the metropolitan area and the Province. The legislative building now houses only the law-making legislative assembly sessions and the ministerial and administrative staffs of the various departments of government.

There are fifteen such departments contained within the building covering every aspect of Provincial authority and policy administration. Each of the members of the Cabinet of the Province is a Minister of one or more of the departments. These Ministers, elected Members of the Legislature are appointed by the Premier from the majority or government party in the legislative assembly. The Ministers translate the policy of the legislature into administrative action within their various departments. Because, through the election process, governments and Cabinet Ministers change periodically, each department is permanently headed at the administration level by a senior civil servant known as the Deputy Minister of the department. Though governments change, the Deputy Minister remains and provides the necessary continuity of departmental administration. He is, in effect, the general manager of his particular department.

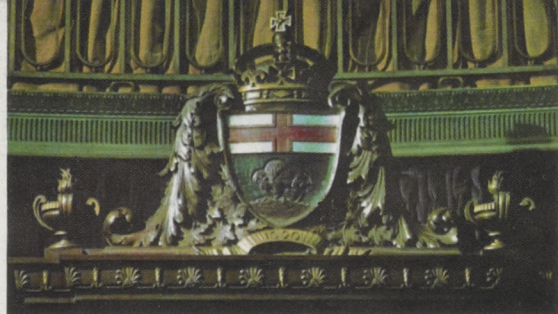
The legislative building also contains the Lieutenant Governor's suite. He represents the Queen of Canada in the Province of Manitoba. It is in these luxurious surroundings that visiting dignitaries are received. In an adjoining office, the Lieutenant-Governor discharges his important duties. He is appointed by the Governor-General in Council, on recommendation of his responsible advisers — the Government of Canada.

The legislative building, therefore, is an active and exciting place in constant use in the service of the people of Manitoba. It is, in this sense, an office building with people hurrying along its ornate corridors on urgent business and with the hum and clatter of business equipment and ringing telephones muffled unobtrusively behind thick panelled doors. It is the place where legislation is debated and enacted, where policies are implemented into administrative action for the benefit of the people and Province of Manitoba.

It is, essentially, the seat of government of Manitoba.



The Legislature



The focal point of the whole building is, of course, the Legislative Chamber. It is here that the 57 members of the legislative assembly of Manitoba meet to make the laws that govern the Province.

The members desks are arranged in the shape of a horse-shoe around the speaker's chair. All debates are addressed to the speaker, himself an elected member of the assembly and usually a member of the governing or majority party. The members are elected from all parts of the Province — 27 of the 57 being elected from Greater Winnipeg.

There are sixty desks and chairs of walnut with inlaid ebony in the chamber arranged in three tiers rising from a sunken floor in the centre. Each member's desk is equipped with a microphone connected to a public address system and also to a recording machine which is used for the publication of Hansard which is the verbatim report of all debates and proceedings of the House.

Following an election, the political party which elects the most members forms the government with its leader becoming Premier. He in turn appoints the members

of his cabinet and the speaker usually from within his own party.

Above the speaker's chair, facing the assembly, is the press gallery and opposite it is a large semi-circular public gallery looking down into the chamber.

When the speaker enters the chamber he is preceded by the Sergeant-at-Arms who carries the large gold mace—symbol of authority which signifies the assembly draws its powers from the people and its executive authority from the Crown. No legislation may be debated or voted on if this mace is not in its place on the table on the floor of the house. When the members go into committee of the whole house to discuss such things as spending estimates the mace is placed under the table and the speaker leaves the chair. He may or may not take his seat with the other members but usually retires to his chambers where he may listen to the proceedings on the public address system until he is recalled to the chair by the members.

The government sits to the speaker's right, while across from the government members in the horseshoe — shaped chamber are the official opposition.

TOURIST BRANCH
DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM, RECREATION AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS

Hon Peter Burtniak, Minister

O. S. Eagleton, Deputy Minister

WINNIPEG, MANITOBA, CANADA